

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07 SP-02

SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /126 W

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7977

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 4498

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ENRG, ID

SUBJECT: ENERGY INITIATIVES FOR VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO THE ASEAN

AREA

REF: (A) MANILA 5272, (B) BANGKOK 9794, (C) JAKARTA 4287,
(D) SINGAPORE 1536, (E) CANBERRA 2438, (F) WELLINGTON 01638

1. THE STRONG INTEREST REFLECTED IN REFTELS IN ENERGY
MATTERS - ESPECIALLY IN IMPROVING NON-CONVENTIONAL SOURCES
OF ENERGY FOR RURAL AREAS - RECALLS THE SOMEWHAT PARALLEL
CONCERN IN ASIA TWO DECADES AGO WITH THREATENED DISASTER
UNLESS PRODUCTION OF THE STAPLE CROP OF THE REGION (RICE)
COULD SOMEHOW BE DRAMATICALLY EXPANDED. THANKS TO THE
FORESIGHT OF THE ROCKEFELLER AND FORD FOUNDATIONS, SCIEN-
TISTS AND PLANT "TECHNICIANS" WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER AT
IRRI IN THE PHILIPPINES WHERE THE GREEN REVOLUTION WAS
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SOON BORN. DISASTER WAS AVERTED AND WE AND OUR FRIENDS
IN ASIA NOW HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY (AND TIME) TO DEAL WITH
THE "SECOND GENERATION" FOOD PROBLEMS.

2. WHEN I READ THE SPECIFIC CONCERNS AND INITIATIVES
SUGGESTED FROM POSTS THE VICE PRESIDENT WILL VISIT, I WAS
STRUCK BY THE COMMON INTEREST IN PURSUING RESEARCH AND

ITS APPLICATION IN NON-CONVENTIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF ENERGY - WIND, SOLAR, MICRO-HYDRO, BIO-MASS, PYROLYTIC CONVERSION, ETC. RATHER THAN FOR U.S. TO ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH EACH ASEAN COUNTRY SEPARATELY ON RESEARCH DIMENSIONS OF NON-CONVENTIONAL/ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF ENERGY I SUGGEST CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO THE VICE PRESIDENT TAKING INITIATIVE TO OFFER U.S. FINANCING FOR AN ASEAN SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON NON-CONVENTIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY DESIGNED ESPECIALLY TO INCLUDE NEEDS OF RURAL AREAS. SUCH COMMITMENT SHOULD, OF COURSE, BE KEYED TO DEVELOPMENT OF DETAILED AND AGREED PLAN FOR THE REGIONAL CENTER AND ITS CHARTER AND CUSTOMARY AUTHORITIES.

3. AS WELL PLANNED AND SUPPORTED REGIONAL CENTER FOR ENERGY RESEARCH COULD BRING TOGETHER TEAMS OF SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICIANS FROM DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO A SITE AGREED UPON BY ASEAN MEMBERS, WHERE RESEARCH AND APPLICATION OF RESEARCH COULD BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, AND WHICH WOULD SUPPORT NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAMS. REGIONAL ENERGY CENTER WOULD NOT, OF COURSE, PRECLUDE BILATERAL COOPERATION.

4. PROJECT OF THIS NATURE SHOULD, IN MY JUDGEMENT, BE VIEWED AS EVIDENCE OF AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR ONE OF MOST URGENT PROBLEMS OF ASEAN (AND LARGER) REGION, AND AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VEHICLE FOR EASY AND CONTINUING ASSOCIATION OF UNITED STATES DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND PRIVATE SECTOR WITH THIS DIMENSION OF ENERGY PROBLEM. WITH SOME PAST VENTURES OF REGIONAL COOPERATION IN MIND, I WOULD URGE THAT IF IDEA IS PURSUED WE NOT GET HUNG UP ON A COMPLEX FORMULA OF FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS NOR OF TOO CLOSE TIE-IN TO ASEAN GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY. IRRI'S HIGH YIELDING SEEDS MIGHT NOT YET HAVE BEEN FOUND IF THE RESEARCH HAD DEPENDED UPON 6 - 8 GOVERNMENTS AGREEING ON FORMULA FOR SUPPORT LET ALONE ADMINISTRATION FOR AN UNPROVEN RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE. TO BE EFFECTIVE THE ENERGY CENTER WOULD NEED TO OPERATE UNDER ITS OWN CHARTER AND BOARD WITH COMPARABLE INDEPENDENCE. A VIABLE FORMULA FOR FIRST FIVE YEARS MIGHT PROVIDE FOR 50 PCT FINANCING BY USG, 25 PCT BY OIL COMPANIES AND/OR FOUNDATIONS AND THE BALANCE BY ASEAN MOST OF WHICH WOULD LIKELY BE FROM THE HOST COUNTRY IN FORM OF LAND FOR SITE. GOA AND GNZ MAY BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATION, WHICH COULD BE EXPLORED DURING VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. IF THE NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY CENTER GETS OFF TO A GOOD START AND IF ITS INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER IS PRESERVED IT SHOULD BE ABLE ATTRACT OTHER OTHER DONORS AS HAVE ALL OF THE INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CENTERS,

AND TO SOME DEGREE THE REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL CENTERS
SPONSORED BY THE SEA MINISTERS OF EDUCATION. IF THE CENTER
DOES NOT PROVE ITS WORTH AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL WITHIN FIVE
YEARS AND IF THE U.S. ELECTS NOT TO CONTINUE SUPPORT, THEN
HOST ASEAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NO DOUBT BE GLAD TO TAKE OVER
FACILITIES FOR NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL OR OTHER RESEARCH
PURPOSES.

5. I RECOGNIZE IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO STAFF THIS
PROPOSAL FOR FIRM COMMITMENT BY TIME OF VICE PRESIDENT'S
TRIP. IT SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE POSSIBLE TO OFFER U.S.
SPONSORSHIP FOR STUDY TO DEVELOP SUCH A PROJECT, AND IF
STDY FAVORABLE TO SEEK FUNDING FROM CONGRESS FOR MAJOR
U.S. CONTRIBUTION. U.S. COULD ALSO SPONSOR MEETING IN
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ASEAN CAPITAL TO DEVELOP PROJECT. THERE WOULD PRESUMABLY
BE TIME TO EXPLORE CONCEPT WITH ASEAN SECRETARIAT TO OB-
TAIN THEIR REACTION PRIOR TO VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

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6. GIVEN STRONG INTEREST CITED REFTELS OF ASEAN (AND GOA/GNZ) GOVERNMENTS IN COOPERATING WITH U.S. ON ENERGY PROGRAMS, A U.S. INITIATIVE SUCH AS PROPOSED COULD BE A TIMELY STEP IN ADDING SUBSTANCE TO ASEAN-U.S. CONSULTATIONS. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT ATTEMPTED TO PROJECT THE COST OF A REGIONAL ENERGY CENTER, A FACILITY ALONG GENERAL LINES OF IRRI BUT WITH MORE EXTENSIVE MECHANICAL FACILITIES AND LABS WOULD NO DOUBT OVER TIME REQUIRE \$10 MILLION AND THAT MUCH AGAIN FOR OPERATIONS OVER A 5 - 7 YEAR PERIOD.

7. WHILE THIS IS A SMALL U.S. INVESTMENT IN RELATION TO WHAT SOME IN REGION HOPING FOR FROM ASEAN-U.S. CONSULTATIONS, IT IS CONCEIVABLE THIS PROJECT COULD HAVE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT IF IT BECOMES IDENTIFIED WITH A SERIOUS U.S. INTEREST IN SHARING U.S. TECHNOLOGY AND IN DEVELOPING CAPACITY IN THE PROJECT FOR A GENUINE TWO-WAY EXCHANGE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY FIELD. THE PROJECT MIGHT HAVE PARTICULAR APPEAL TO AND WIN STRONG ENDORSEMENT FROM MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO HAVE TAKEN SPECIAL INTEREST IN ENERGY PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SUCH AS CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS OF VERMONT. PROJECT WOULD ALSO BE CHANNEL FOR EXPANDING RESEARCH IN APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY FOR WHICH MANY APPLICATIONS RELATE TO ENERGY MATTERS. INDEED IN MANY RESPECTS NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY IS SYNONYMOUS WITH APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY.

8. BY USING ANALOGY OF IRRI, I DO NOT WISH IMPLY A REGIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY LIKELY TO PRODUCE THE SPECTACULAR RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM EARLY BREAKTHROUGH ON HIGH YIELDING RICE VARIETIES. I AM IMPRESSED HOWEVER WITH EXISTENCE OF NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES FOR ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES FOR VILLAGES THAT SHOULD BENEFIT FROM A TRULY SERIOUS EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE PRODUCT THROUGH RESEARCH AND FIELD TESTING AND FROM A SUSTAINED TIE-IN TO PARALLEL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. I FEAR THAT WITHOUT SUCH IMPROVEMENTS THESE ENERGY ALTERNATIVES WILL SURELY BE SLOW IN EMERGING. WITH SUCH EFFORTS, TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS OR BREAKTHROUGH ARE MORE LIKELY. THE VALIDITY OF THE IDEA DOES, LIKE IRRI, RELY UPON THE ADVANTAGE OF BRINGING TOGETHER IN ASEAN SETTING A TEAM OF COMMITTED SCIENTISTS - RELYING HEAVILY UPON EXPATRIATES GIVEN THE SHORTAGE OF TRAINED LOCAL MANPOWER IN ENERGY FIELD AND THEIR FOCUS ON SHORT TERM GOALS AS POINTED OUT FROM MANILA.

8. EMBASSIES IN OTHER ASEAN CAPITALS MAY WISH TO COMMENT.

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